

## Historical Address

*THE MEETING HOUSE*  
*SPRINGS GRAVEYARD*

$$By$$

Allan D. Thompson

*Carlisle, Pa., 1927*

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SPRINGS GRAVEYARD*

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*By*

*Allan D. Thompson*

*Read Before*

*First Presbyterian Sunday School, 1925*

*Hamilton Library Association, 1926*

*Cumberland County Chapter, Daughters of the  
American Revolution, 1926*



Here lys the Body of  
Janet Thomson, wife  
to ye Revd. Samuel  
Thomson who deceasd  
Sept. ye 29th, 1744. Age  
33 years.

# *The Meeting House Springs Graveyard*

“Remove not the ancient landmark,” says the writer of the Proverbs. One such ancient landmark is that which is the subject of this paper—the old graveyard at Meeting House Springs. It is worth our study and attention because it contains the oldest marked grave in Cumberland County, and also because it has close association with the very beginning of history in this section. It may prove of real value, also, to have a list of the marked graves which are now there, such as is appended hereto.

I have been led to a study of this graveyard partly because of its intrinsic historic interest, and partly also because of its connection with the First Presbyterian Church of Carlisle, whose property it is as will be shown hereafter. In reading over the early history of the Presbyterian Church in Carlisle one is impressed with the great wealth of historic associations. There are very many interesting events and personages connected with its past. Many of these personages and events have been fully written about by the historians. But the old graveyard has been rather sadly neglected both by past and present generations—yes, especially by the present, and it is one of the purposes of this paper to arouse an interest in this graveyard that will lead to greater attention to its physical care.

## **Location of Graveyard**

The Meeting House Springs graveyard is located Northwest of Carlisle about two miles, near the South bank of the Conodoguinet Creek. It is on the top of a hill that overlooks the stream, from which it is removed about 500 feet. A spring of water bubbles out of the ground along the edge of the stream at the foot of the hill, and in the olden days was doubtless of larger volume than it is now, and was of great use to the settlers

as a source of drinking water although there are similar springs but of less volume of water all along the banks of the creek. Persons now well up in years remember the spring as shooting farther out of the ground than it does now, and of more volume, probably because it has gradually become clogged, since no care is taken of it; also because in the gradual disappearance of the forests, the streams and springs must suffer.

I have often stood at the graveyard, where nearby was located the old log church that was built somewhere around 1734 or 1735, and wondered just why this spot was selected for a meeting house. One important reason doubtless was the good drinking water, which was essential for both man and beast. In the early days the members of the church came to worship in the morning and stayed the better part of the day, taking their lunch with them. Travel at first was altogether on foot or horseback. There were no wagon roads. Another reason for the location may have been that it was an Indian trail or road, which made it more accessible than any other spot. It is said that there were several Indian trails that crossed at this spot. But even so it was all dense woods. We have a story in our family of how my father's mother, coming here from Lancaster County about 1840 to live with her father on the Watts farm just above Meeting House Springs, became lost at night in the woods West of town, thus showing that even 100 years after the church at Meeting House Springs was started the woods was thick enough that a stranger might lose his way.

No doubt also a site along the Conodoguinet was to be preferred to one along the Letort. The Frenchman, James Letort, had settled along the spring called after him, about 1730 or a little earlier. Perhaps the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians did not want to be near him, and so placed their meeting house along the Conodoguinet,



three or four miles away. The spot itself is a pretty one, with natural advantages, but these alone would not account for its selection. Perhaps after all it was largely a matter of chance.

### **Original Log Meeting House**

Here at these springs, ever afterwards called Meeting House Springs, a log meeting house was erected about 1734-1736. The exact spot upon which it stood has been lost for many, many years. Even so painstaking an historian as Dr. C. P. Wing could not learn the site by consulting the oldest residents of Carlisle and vicinity, in 1858. It is useless to speculate about it; several locations are suggested, either of which, or none of which, may be correct. Certain it is that it was near the graveyard which is now there, for if you will recall the old country churches, especially the Presbyterian churches at Silver Spring, Big Spring, Middle Spring and Rocky Spring, you will know that the church meeting house and the graveyard were not far apart, in fact, often in the same enclosure. One tradition is that the log church was located at the Northwest corner of the present stone wall; credence is lent to this supposition because it is said that when the foundation for the present fence was dug some dressed stone were unearthed there. But in explanation of this I have the word of Mrs. Sara Fishburn, who went to live there on the farm in 1860, that her husband did not share the "dressed stone theory" for he said that the stone found there were the ones used to measure by in dressing the stone for the wall. That may not explain much, but it is the opinion of one who lived there just within a year or so after the time the stone were supposed to have been unearthed. Besides, who knows that the old log church ever had a stone foundation? It may have had a few stone pillars or supports, but not likely a foundation on all sides. In conversation with the present occupant of

the farm he stated that he had come across nothing in or on the ground that would in the least suggest where the old meeting house had stood. So that all we can affirm is that all trace has been lost.

### **Description of Meeting Houses**

The following is an interesting description of the meeting houses of those early days. "The walls were doubtless of logs hewn on the inner and perhaps outer side, united in a peculiar manner at the corners, and with the interstices filled with clay plaster. The floor and ceiling were of split logs as were also the seats of the worshippers. The doors were at one end and the pulpit at the other, with windows at the sides and one large window over the pulpit. The men and women occupied separate ranges of seats as was customary in former times and one bench under the pulpit was intended for the clerk who gave out the psalms and tunes which were to be sung in worship. The elders also were assigned a seat by themselves where they could see the congregation and attend to order. The whole building is said to have been low in elevation and not very extensive on the ground. A grove of trees nearby was preserved and used for worshipping outdoors in favorable weather."

In discussing the location it is well to remember that all the old meeting houses were located at springs. This was necessary as already mentioned because of a supply of drinking water for man and animals. But notice how the sites through the valley are almost equidistant. Let your mind review the location of the old "springs" churches. First Silver Spring; then Meeting House Springs, West about 11 miles; then West again to Big Spring (Newville), about 11 miles; then West again to Middle Spring, about 11 miles; then West to Falling Spring, Chambersburg, about 11 miles, also 11 miles West again to Greencastle, where the



original church was at a spring. All were at springs. There was a church rule that each congregation had jurisdiction for a radius of 5 and one-half miles from its meeting house, which accounts for 11 miles being the distance apart of the early churches.

### **Mode of Pioneer Life**

If it were more to the purpose of this paper, something might be said of the mode of life in the pioneer days. Indians roamed the land, and much of the time there was savage warfare. Carlisle and vicinity was an outpost and subject to many Indian depredations. Like the Pilgrim days in Massachusetts, the settlers took their guns with them to worship. Mrs. Fishburn, above referred to, says that she frequently heard Judge Henderson's father tell how the settlers carried their guns to service and the whole family went and stayed for the day. Between the Indians on the one hand and the war of the Revolution on the other, together with the hardships of making a living out of the land, the pioneers of this section had a hard life. But it made them appreciate the blessings of their religion and their worship all the more. For more detailed accounts of the life of the times, and of the Indian warfare, I must refer you to the histories.

### **Present Appearance of Graveyard**

More particularly now as to the present graveyard. It is a plot of ground about an acre in extent, about 170 by 210 feet. It is enclosed on all sides with a high, wide and substantial stone wall, about five feet high, with a large iron gate made by John and James Bosler, blacksmiths of Carlisle, at the entrance on the East side. The interior just now presents a rather sorry, dilapidated appearance, only the Henderson plot and one or two others being cared for. A granolithic walk leads from the gate to the Henderson plot at the Northwest

corner. As this walk was put down by the Henderson family, I have wondered if it followed an older earth or stone path, or if it were run arbitrarily in the most convenient manner to reach that plot. Most likely it is the original path, for it would be more or less of a desecration to put down a path across graves as would have had to be done had the path been changed.

The present fence was built in 1859 or 1860 by John Dunbar and William M. Henderson, Sr. The fence preceding it was either pole or rail, my informant did not remember exactly which. Parenthetically it may be added that the nearby barn was built in 1849 and the house in 1859. The former house was right North of the present house.

An interesting fact in connection with the fence is that Kline's Gazette, published in Carlisle, in an issue of 1785, contained a notice for people to meet at James Weakley's to discuss a fence for the graveyard. The Weakly plot is in this graveyard, and his homestead was in South Middleton along the York Road.

Another interesting fact is the existence of a document—a receipt for the building of the present fence. This is in possession of Mrs. Lenore Embick Flower, a lineal descendant of John Dunbar. It reads as follows:

“Carlisle, Pa., Jan. 8, 1861. Messrs. Henderson and Dunbar. To Joseph Shump, Dr. To building three hundred perch of stone wall at Meating House Springs grave yard. 300 perch at 75 cents. \$225.00. By cash \$125.00. To flour (Henderson) \$24.00. By cash \$25.00. By order \$10.00. By cash by Dunbar \$25.00. \$209.00. Paid John R. Turner for stone, \$3.00. Ditto William MacElwee, .75. \$228.75. Balance due, \$19.75. 1861, March 13. By cash on account \$15.00. Balance due \$4.75. Carlisle, August 17, 1861. Received the above balance in full to date. JOSEPH SHUMP.”

Evidently, to judge from this running account, the work was not completely finished for some time, for

the Henderson and Dunbar mentioned were men of means and could have made prompt payment if justified in doing so. Both the Henderson and Dunbar plots are within the graveyard. John Parker Dunbar was a descendant of Richard and Janet Parker.

### **Grant to Church by the Penns**

The graveyard and the church ground or glebe at Meeting House Springs came into the possession of the First Presbyterian Church through a grant of the Penns. On April 9, 1748, there was surveyed and laid out by the Proprietaries "to the Reverend Samuel Thomson, Clerk and John McClure, yeoman, both of the County of Lancaster (Cumberland not having been formed at that time), as trustees for the religious society of Presbyterians residing in W. Pennsboro Township, a certain tract of land containing 120 acres and the usual allowance of six acres per cent. for roads." The title was passed June 21, 1749, "the 23rd year of the reign of King George the Second," the consideration being 18 pounds, 12 shillings, being raised by contribution among the congregation. The trustees were subsequently increased by the addition of the names of Robert Dunning, John Davis, John Mitchel and Alex Sanderson. The land was to be for the use of the congregation as a majority of it should determine, and there was to be paid to the proprietaries on the first day of March of each year one-half penny sterling for every acre or the value thereof. How long this payment was continued I find no record. This deed is attested by James Hamilton, lieutenant-governor, with the great seal, and is on file in Philadelphia County, Patent Book "A," vol. 14, page 186. The glebe proved to contain about 143 acres of good land. Within this tract was the God's Acre about which we write.

In 1827 the glebe or farm was sold, the deed being on record in the Cumberland County court house, Book

“KK,” vol. 1, page 163. It conveys the 143 acres the same as conveyed by the proprietaries for the sum of \$3500 to Philip Weaver, but makes the following provision or exception, which is important:

“Excepting and reserving always nevertheless all the ground which has been used, and as it is now enclosed as a graveyard, or place for burying the dead on said premises, together with the wall or fence enclosing the same, with free and uninterrupted ingress, egress and regress to, into and from said graveyard.”

The effect of this is to retain the graveyard as a possession of the First Presbyterian Church. The congregation originally possessed the glebe, sold it and gave title, reserved the graveyard plot for its own, and has never parted with it since.

### **First Preaching Services**

We come now to brief mention of the first preaching services at Meeting House Springs, or Pennsborough as it was called. The first record that can be found on the minutes of the Donegal Presbytery to which the church at first belonged, is that of October 6, 1734, when Rev. Alexander Craighead was ordered to preach to the “people over the river for two or three Sabbaths in November.” From this date to the call of the first regular pastor there are various references to the appointment of supplies. In 1736 the people are designated for the first time as “the people on the Conodoguinet” and it may be that this was the year in which the old original log church at Meeting House Springs was built. On August 31, 1737, the first mention of the Pennsborough meeting house occurs in the records of Presbytery. This fixes the time definitely—that is, it was that year or before.

In 1737 Rev. Samuel Thomson, then from Ireland, became a minister in the Donegal Presbytery and was ordered to supply this church. On August 30, 1738, he



was given a call, and installed as pastor on November 14, 1739, as the following record from the minutes of Presbytery will show:

“Pennsboro, Nov. 14, 1739. Mr. Anderson, at the meeting house door, gave publick advertisement that if any could advance any lawful objection against Mr. Samuel Thomson being set apart to the work of the holy ministry, to both societies in this place, and no objection appearing, Mr. Craighead delivered a sermon from Ezekiel 33:6, and presided in the work of ordination. Accordingly Mr. Samnel Thomson was set apart to the work of the sacred ministry by the imposition of hands, etc.”

It perhaps should be explained that the expression “both societies” referred to the Upper and Lower Pennsboro churches, or, respectively, Meeting House Springs and Silver Spring.

Rev. Samuel Thomson served for ten years, or until 1749, when he resigned. His stay at Meeting House Springs does not seem to have been particularly fruitful, for there was much dissention between pastor and people and in the church at large. The only elder of whom there is a record is Robert McClure who in 1743 is mentioned in the minutes of Presbytery as a commissioner. There are no records of before 1757 in possession of the First Church.

### **No Record of Burials**

With this somewhat lengthy introduction, I will now set forth a list of the stones or markers at present existing and appearing in the old graveyard. How many persons were buried in this small ground we have no means of knowing. No records were ever known to be kept. In clearing the graveyard of weeds, workmen have come across many small stones that look like head or foot stones partly or completely buried, and probably are. Everything indicates that the yard is more



largely occupied by graves than the present array of visible stones would indicate. The church was at this spot for at least 21 years, and in that time alone there would have been a considerable number of deaths. But then, when the congregation moved to town in 1757 it is more than likely that burials from that time forth were in the graveyard in the town.

For example of stories of persons buried here of whom there is no record on the grave stones, there came to Carlisle on a visit recently a gentleman named Brown, a lawyer of Springfield, Ill., in search of information about his ancestors. He said that he had learned that his forebear, James Brown, was a member of the State Convention of Penna. of July 15, 1776, which met in Philadelphia; that he was a member of Captain (Reverend) Steel's company of cavalry in the Revolution; a member of the State Assembly of 1776-1778 and that he was buried in the Presbyterian burial ground at Carlisle. There is only one such burial ground, but if this patriot is buried here it is in an unmarked grave. Dr. Norcross states in his history that Col. Robert Magaw, a famous officer of the Revolution, is buried at Meeting House Springs but this is disputed by other writers who say he is buried in the Old Graveyard. Mrs. Flower states that the Dunbar family has evidence of other members of that family buried here whose names are not on any of the stones; including John Dunbar, a Revolutionary soldier.

### **List of Markers—Weakley Plot**

To the right as one enters the gate is the Weakley plot. This has been fenced with a curbing of concrete by the Weakley Family Association. It contains three slabs, lettered as follows:

“Here lies the body of James Weakley who departed this life June 16, 1772, aged 68 years.”

“Here lyes the body of Jane Weakley wife of James Weakley who departed this life Nov. 30, 1768, aged 53 years.”

“To the memory of James Weakley, infant son of Samuel and Hetty Weakley, who departed this life Sept. 4, 1777, aged 13 months.” (Poetry.)

The mention of the name Weakley at once suggests a family of historic associations in this section. But it is not the purpose of this paper to go into family history, except for an occasional reference. Continuing, we find:

Two sunken graves—no stones.

#### **Graham—Fleming—Kinkead**

“Here lyes the body of William Graham, who decesd Aprile ye 24, 1761, aged 67 years.” (Notice he was born in 1694.)

“Jane Connelly, died July 14, 1864, aged 72 years.”

“In memory of John Fleming, departed this life March 24, 1814, aged 54.”

“Here lyes the body of John Fleming who departed this life April 29, 1761, aged 39 years.”

“Here Lyes the Body of John Kinkead who departed this life August 4, 1772, aged 51 years.” (We often hear of graveyards where men who served in the Revolutionary war are buried. Here is a man who lived and died before the Revolution began.)

“Here lyes the body of Mary Kinkead, August A. D. 1758, aged 13 years.”

#### **Laird—McAllister—Young**

“In memory of Samuel Laird, Esq., who departed this life the 27 of September A. D. 1806 in the 74th year of his age.” (Poetry as follows:)

“Of simple manners, pure, and heart upright,  
In mild, religious ways he took delight;  
As elder, magistrate or judge he still  
Studied obedience to his Maker’s will.

A husband kind, a friend to the distressed,  
He wished that all around him might be blessed;  
A patriot in the worst of times approved,  
By purest motives were his actions moved.”

“Sacred to the memory of Mary, daughter of James Young, and wife of Samuel Laird, Esq., who was born October 31, 1741, was almost 50 years a wife and 27 a widow, and died February 4, 1833, in the full exercise of her mental power and with the hope of Heaven.” It will be noticed she died at the age of 92.

“Andrew McAllister, died Nov. 1804, aged 73 years. Margaret, wife of Andrew McAllister, died August 1804, aged 61.” This family name is perpetuated in the McAllister Church and McAllister school house along the Chambersburg pike. (One stone.)

“Here lies the body of James Young, Seiner, who departed this life February 22, 1747, aged 79 years.” Note the spelling of “Seiner.” This is the fourth oldest marker. Note that the deceased was born in the 17th century—1668.

“Here lyes the body of Mery Donnal who departed this life October 1747, aged 60 years.” (“Donnal” may be O’Donnel.)

“James McAllester died April 23, 1885, in 77th year of his age.”

“Archibald McAllister died June 1, 1858, aged 85.”

“Eleanor McAllister died Jan. 2, 1858, aged 75.”

“In memory of John Sanderson of N. Middleton Township, died Aug. 12, 1831. Aged 80 years.”

“In memory of Lydia Sanderson of N. Middleton Township, died July 4th, 1813, aged 60 years.”

“In memory of Alexander Sanderson of N. Middleton Township, died June 14, 1823, aged 28 years.”

### **McCullough—Chambers—Denny**

(Coat of Arms.) “Here lies the body of Alexander McCullough who deceased January 1746, aged 60 years.” (Second oldest.)

“Here lies the body of Hannah McFarlane, born April 24, 1766, deceased May 1769.”

“Here lies the body of James McFarlane, born Dec. the 24th 1695; died October 1770.” His name appears as tax collector for W. Pennsboro, 1746.

(Coat of arms.) “Here lys the body of Ranald Chambers, who deceased December 24, 1746, aged 60 years.” (Third oldest.) In 1735 (Nov. 4) the court sitting at Lancaster appointed Ranald Chambers one of the viewers to lay out a road “leading from Harris’ Ferry (now Harrisburg) toward the Potomac River.”

“In memory of Daniel Denny who departed this life Oct. 18, 1834, aged 72.” This family name is perpetuated in “Denny Hall” of the College.

“In memory of John Denny, who died October 3, 1831, aged 68.”

“In memory of Mrs. Mary Denny Ramsey, who departed this life April 27, 1842, aged 66.”

“Here lies the body of John Rodgers. (No date.)

### **Parker—Henderson**

We come now to the Parker-Henderson plot. There are 13 markers or tombstones on this plot. There are representatives of three wars buried here, the Revolution, the War of 1812 and the Civil War. The oldest grave on this plot is that of Major Alexander Parker, who, I learn from a paper prepared by the late J. Webster Henderson, Esq., was “the grandson of Richard Parker, an emigrant from the Province of Ulster, Ire-

land, in 1725, who settled upon the land a short distance west of the glebe. He made application for a patent in 1743 for land described as that upon which he had resided "ye ten years past." Major Alexander Parker who was born in 1753 and died in 1792, was a distinguished officer of the Penna. Line and was an original member of the Society of the Cincinnati. He enlisted Jan. 1776. Commissioned captain in Col. Wm. Irvine's regiment Mar. 20, 1777. At the close of the Revolutionary War he emigrated to Virginia and upon lands acquired by settlement and purchase he laid out the town of Parkersburg at the mouth of the Little Kanawba."

The Parker-Henderson plot contains the following (20) graves: (13 stones:)

"Here lies (much lamented) the body of Andrew Parker who departed this life the 10th day of April, A. D. 1805, aged 43 years. He was a kind and affectionate husband and indulgent parent and a worthy member of society.

A few short years of evil passed,

We reach the happy shore

Where death divided friends at last

Shall meet to part no more.

Also his son, Richard Parker, who died March 4, 1864, aged 67 years."

William M. Henderson, 1836—1862. Sarah E. Henderson, 1828—1886. Elizabeth Parker Henderson, wife of Wm. M., 1799—1869. Wm. M. Henderson, 1795—1886. Harriet S. Henderson, 1834—1838.

Robert M. Henderson, 1866—1868.

Robert M. Henderson, 1861—1863.

Major Alexander Parker and two children. Margaret and John (no date).

Susanna Northland, 1808—1899.

John Webster Henderson. 1856—1922.

Robert M. Henderson, LL.D., 1827—1906.



Margaret Ann Webster, wife of Robert M. Henderson, 1825—1908.

Richard Parker Henderson, 1838—1901.

Rebecca Parker Henderson, 1832—1914.

Andrew Parker Henderson, 1825—1913.

Rebecca Henderson, 1864—1925.

Continuing we find:

“In memory of Jane Crocket, wife of George Crocket, 1814, aged 48. Amidst the noise, the bustle and folly of life, reader pause for a moment to think of eternity.”

(Face of cherub, on blue slate stone) “Here lyes the body of Thomas Witherspoon who departed this life March ye 22nd, 1759, aged 57 years.”

“Jane Lindsey, wife of James, 1833, aged 32.”

### **Black—Dunbar—Forbes**

The Black family plot:

Isabella Black, 1841, aged 56.

Emma U. Boyd, 1907.

Isabella Black, 1846.

William C. Black and wife Susan A.

Isabella Black, died 1860, aged 6.

John Black, died 1842, aged 63.

Martha J. Black, died 1851, aged 1 year.

Eliza A., died 1872, aged 56.

William E. Black, died 1860, aged 2.

Martha J. Black, died 1851, aged 1.

W. Edwin Black, died 1860, aged 2.

William G. Black, died 1875, aged 41.

Robert McQuinn Black, died 1901.

Susan A. Black, died 1902, aged 74.

Sarah Black, died 1902, born 1823.

The Dunbar plot:

John Dunbar, 1808—1868.

Agnes Dunbar, 1811—1855.

James A. Dunbar, 1840—1875.

On the reverse side the names of six children all of whom died in infancy.

James, 1836—1838; John, 1838—1841; William, 1841—1846; Andrew, 1843—1846; Margaret, 1849—1850; Laura, 1852—1853.

The Forbes plot:

Jane Forbes, died 1830, aged 77. (Daughter of James Parker who was a son of Richard and Janet Parker, original settlers.)

John Forbes, died 1823, aged 78. (Revolutionary soldier.)

James Forbes, died 1800, aged 28.

Jane Forbes, died 1822, aged 21.

Andrew Forbes, died 1854, aged 71.

John P. Forbes, died 1829, aged 41.

Richard Forbes, died 1823, aged 33.

Margaret Forbes, died 1870, aged 75.

Ann Black, niece of John Forbes, Sr., died 1846.

Continuing:

“Mary, wife of Benjamin Myers, died 1842, aged 30.”

### **Greason—Drennen**

“William Greason, 1805—1877.”

“Mary Greason, died 1854, aged 68.” Mary Greason was the wife of James Greason. Her maiden name was Mary Carothers. Her husband died in 1855 and was buried at Silver Spring as requested in his will. William Greason was the oldest son of James and Mary (Carothers) Greason.

“Eliza Bear, 1814—1896.”

“Elizabeth, wife of William Carothers, died 1874, aged 82.”

“Mary Coulter, Bo 1716, Di 1772.”

(In southeast corner) “Here lies the body of John and Alexander McKehan.”

“Here lies the body of William Dennison Johnston, who departed this life May 4, 1776, aged 1 year and 7 months.”

The last but one that I find is that of another officer of the Revolution. The inscription on this stone is:

“Cp’t William Drennen, died 1831, aged 78.”

William Drennen was 35 years old in 1788; 6 feet, 1 inch in height; fair complexion; was born in Ireland; occupation “clark”; enlisted under Captain Zeigler April 23, 1788. See 5th Penna. Archives, Vol. 14, page 845.

### **Janet Thomson, 1744**

The last and most interesting is that of the wife of the first pastor of the church. It is also the oldest marked grave in the graveyard, and so far as I can discover the oldest marked grave in Cumberland County, and this may mean West of the Susquehanna River. It is 13 years older than the oldest marked grave in the Old Graveyard, Carlisle (Charles Robb, 1734—1757), and 3 years older than any at Silver Spring. This grave is marked by a stone on a raised base, lying flat. The inscription is now perfectly legible having once been re-cut, and is:

“Here lys the body of Janet Thomson wife to ye Revd Samuel Thomson, who deceasd Sept ye 29th 1744, aged 33 years.”

A coat of arms is engraved above this inscription, showing a helmet, gauntlet, deer head and hunting knife.

Does not this death of the wife of the first pastor of the church, from what cause we know not, suggest a tragedy? In early life, living in the wilderness, enduring the privations of frontier life and serving as the helpmeet of a young pastor at his first charge—there is something of infinite sadness as we contemplate this grave.

Although the marker is there now, it is bound to decay and the inscription to be effaced unless some protection is given it. Tomstones do sometimes even disappear. There is a case where the curator of a nearby graveyard was found filling up a new grave with stone markers removed from other graves. There are also instances where stones have been carried away.

In connection with the life of Rev. Thomson and the death of his wife, Dr. Wing in his history says:

“It would seem that in 1749 Mr. Thomson had thoughts of a second marriage, but on account of some supposed unsuitableness in the proposed connection, the congregation were averse to it, and invited Presbytery to interfere. At the request of the lady’s father, ‘her character was discussed and inquired into, she was censured for imprudence, the congregation was justified in objection to their minister joining in marriage with her, and Mr. Thomson was approved for his moderation and condescension and for his regards for the interests of religion and the peace of the congregation in deferring his proceedings in what appeared to give occasion of offense.’” On the whole Presbytery recommended to him for his own sake and for her sake ‘entirely to drop his procedure in that which has occasioned so much uneasiness to himself and his congregation and has a visible tendency to mar those great ends.’ Whether or not Mr. Thomson actually followed this counsel or not we are not advised but we know from traditions in his family that he was married a second time at some period in his ministry.”

Rev. Thomson left one son, presumably by his first wife Janet who lies buried in the graveyard. This son was sent to England for an education, joined the Episcopal Church, returned to America about 1750, became a missionary of Christ Church of Philadelphia among the Indians and settlers, distributed relief supplies at Carlisle during the Indian wars, was connected with the

Episcopal church here and is said to lie buried in a corner of the Episcopal section of the Public Square of Carlisle.

### Summary

There are now 58 markers in this graveyard, containing the names of 93 persons. Many of them are almost illegible and soon will be entirely so, and to preserve them is one of the purposes of this paper.

The oldest is that of Janet Thomson, 1744; the second oldest, Alex. McCullough, Jan. 1746; the third oldest Ranald Chambers, Dec. 1746, and the fourth James Young, Sr., 1747. There are five dated before 1750 and 11 more dated before 1776.

The oldest born is James Young, Sr., who was born in 1668. There are 6 who were born in the 17th century.

There are three Revolutionary soldiers whose graves are marked—Parker, Forbes and Drennen; one not marked, Dunbar, and doubtless others (Brown, Magaw).

Truly this is an historic spot. We know too little about it, but at least we shall preserve this list of the dead buried there as we now find it. The yard itself should be well cared for, and the graves of the soldiers decorated with the American flag. Appropriate also would be a monument by some governmental or patriotic body to the memory of the Revolutionary heroes who sleep there.







